

I got the HOG chip from Mike Vuolo back in April of this year. The PDB chip came in a trade back in 2010. I feel certain there is a connection but at this time I have no real proof. Below you will read my "thoughts" at this time on the 2 chips and the connection. Elkhart Lake was a huge illegal gambling operation at the time both chips were delivered. There is a lot of info about the Elkhart Lake joints on the web.

Enough of that:

Wisconsin:



HOG1att2

HOG-Per Mason records

R.J Demmings

Delivered to Elkhart Lake, WI

100 yellow-200 Blue-400 White

7/7/31

Rupert John "Happy" Denning, a Wisconsin native, died at Sheboygan in 1968 age 73.

pic of Denning from 1943:



Rupert Denning

HOG2att2

Denning was a well known sportsman and café/tavern operator in the Sheboygan area for many decades. Unfortunately, I haven't been able to determine what exactly he was doing at Elkhart Lake when the chips were ordered in July 1931, but he was probably associated with one of the popular summer resorts on the lake—many of which had big gambling operations.

In the early 1920's Denning was associated with a place called the Calumet Inn, a popular night club and speakeasy outside of Sheboygan. Ad from 1924:

Calumet Inn

Calumet Drive — At City Limits

Commencing tomorrow we will serve a Chicken Supper every evening from 9 to 12 o'clock.

Billy Marquardt's Orchestra

Will render a musical program every evening ,starting at 9 o'clock.

HOG3att2

About a year after the ad Denning became partners with Kelly Howell in the operation of a place outside of Sheboygan called the "Red Feather." In 1929 there's a new sheriff in town and he raids this "notorious house of ill fame"

Notorious Dive Ignored Notice; Nine Pay \$600

BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE JOURNAL

Sheboygan, Wis.—The combined forces of the sheriff's and police departments raided the notorious Red Feather roadhouse south of Sheboygan on Highway 141 Tuesday night and arrested 9 persons.

The raid was directed by Sheriff Louis C. Tasche, who asked for the aid of police to augment his small force of deputies. The roadhouse keepers, he said, were the first to violate orders he issued immediately after taking office in January that women and gambling devices must be cleaned out.

Kelly Howell and Rupert (Happy) Denning, who have run the Red Feather about four years, were charged with operating a house of ill fame. They and three male inmates, Ernest Steffen, Alex Langman and Otto Burr, were fined \$75 each. The three inmates are proprietors of the Shell, a roadhouse south of the Red Feather. Four women inmates paid \$50 each.

The \$600 in fines and costs was the largest total ever collected in justice court here. Walter C. Meyer, justice of the peace, heard the cases.

The Red Feather has had an unsavory reputation for a long time. It has been the scene of brawls and shootings. The last sensational occurrence there was last August when a Green Bay man shot up the place trying to get his wife, whom he insisted was in one of the private rooms.

Sheriff Tasche's regime so far has not been subjected to the criticism heaped upon his predecessor, Paul Schmidt, who was given an ultimatum by the county board to clean up resorts in the county. Slot machines and other gambling devices are conspicuously absent from places in the county and women only recently came in evidence again.

The Tuesday night raid on the Red Feather, coupled with the fact that prosecution was under the severe "house of ill fame" statute instead of the "disorderly house" law with its small penalties, is expected to have a salutary effect in maintaining obedience to the new sheriff's orders.

My Note: Let me think HMMMMMMMMMMMMM.

Ok 9 people arrested for gambling devices and operating a house of ill repute. They paid a total of \$600 in fines between them. The paper touts the fines were severe because they were arrested under "House Of Ill Fame" statute instead of "Disorderly House" statute. I guess the county would have owed the arrestees if not for the more severe statute arrest. <g>

After the raid Howell re-opened the "Red Feather" as the "Casino." Here's a pic from 1929 when it was the Casino (look-up roadhouse in the dictionary and you'll see this pic):



HOG5att2

Denning does not appear to have been associated with the "Casino" but rather moves into Sheboygan, where by Dec. 1929 he's operating a place at 719 New York Avenue, next door to the Eagles Building. In the early 1930's

Denning would move his place into the Eagles Building where he would operate until around 1943 (in 1943 he bought the "Esquire Tavern" which he operated until 1950).

My note: Operated next door to The Eagles from early 1930 then moved into The Eagles through 1943. HOG chips bought in July 1931. This is as close as we can come to putting the chips in use in one of Denning's joints. I am calling them "The Eagles" with an asterisk. <g>

Read on, our "Friend Of the Hobby" says almost the same thing.

HOG-*

The Eagles

R.J Demmings

719 New York Avenue

Sheboygan, WI

100 yellow-200 Blue-400 White

7/7/31

A couple of ads from 1939:

After The Game

**Stay At
The Eagle's**



Visit the cocktail lounge, the bowling alleys or "Happy's" tavern. They're all under one roof at the Eagle Auditorium. You don't have to step out in the cold air at all. The most convenient spots to go between halves or after the game. You'll find excellent drinks, fine food and friends at "Happy's" and the Bowling Alleys.

Happy Denning's Tavern
and
The Eagle Bowling Alleys
Eagle Building

Dine *and* Dance

At

Happy Denning's Cocktail Lounge

FEATURING

"Skip" Meyer

And His King's Yeomen

DANCING EVERY NIGHT

Visit Luke Steimle at the Bowling Alleys

HOG7att2

When the chips were ordered in July 1931 Denning would have been operating The Eagles on New York Avenue, so I guess it's possible that the chips could have also been used there. The chip delivery address says they were sent to Denning at Elkhart Lake, which at the time was a very popular summer resort (drawing a lot of people from Milwaukee and Chicago). Gambling was a very popular past-time there. Here's a map from 1936 which shows its location relative to Sheboygan and lists some of the resorts which operated there (all were operating in 1931):



I highlighted Crystal Lake as well because in 1939 Denning and Kelly Howell, his old partner from the “Red Feather,” began operating a place there called “Crystal Tavern.” Denning also had a summer home on Crystal Lake. Here’s an ad from 1940:

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Dine And Dance At



Crystal Tavern

Crystal Lake, Wis.

**Wholesome Food
Quick Service . . .**

Make Reservations
For Banquets With
Happy & Kelly

Dancing Every Night Except Monday
(Dancing On Sunday Afternoons)
DON HINTZ and His Orchestra

HOG9att2

Here's an article from the *Milwaukee Journal* from August 20th 1933. The article gives a nice description of what was going on at Elkhart Lake. I highlighted a paragraph which I thought was interesting. It says that the gambling concessions at Elkhart Lake were controlled by a big-shot from Sheboygan who spends his winters on the west coast. When I read this it reminded me of the PDB chip--which was sent to Peter De Braal at Sheboygan in 1932—De Braal used to spend all his winters in the Los Angeles area. Maybe the big-shot was De Braal???

My note: The paragraph he mentions is in first column marked with a grey brush mark.

The Dice Roll at Elkhart Lake; Town Profits, So Nobody 'Kicks'

The wooded shores of Elkhart lake, the throbbing of dance orchestras at Schwartz's and at Pine Point on Saturday nights notwithstanding, must be pretty much as they were when Indian chieftains may have traded there, a century or two ago, with their wampum and their pelts.

Much water has sprung from the springs that feed the lake since then, however. Today chiefs from Chicago and St. Louis, on vacations from their cloak and suit duties, trade their wampum for clicking red, white, blue, mauve, green and golden chips. The wampum is good old American cash, usually in bills of \$10, \$20 and \$50 denominations. As for pelts, they are worn by their women on the gay summer formal gowns that reveal sun-tanned shoulders and backs.

Gambling goes on unabated at the casino at Elkhart lake—gambling such that it makes the boys out in Waukegan county look like little potatoes—and apparently nothing is done about it. Everything is free, wide open and handsome.

"What can we do?" one hotel proprietor put it. "They write up from St. Louis and Chicago and they ask, 'How about it—will there be gambling there this summer?' They wouldn't come if there wasn't. You gotta have it."

Two Casinos Running

And so they have it. There are two casinos, right alongside each other. A third, across the lake, was not opened this summer because the proprietor of the hotel figured, what with the depression and all, business wasn't going to be very rushing. He'll not make the same mistake again, however, he declares. "We've lost too much business because the casino wasn't opened," he says.

The story is that the gambling concessions are owned by a big shot at Sheboygan. From May to October he operates at Elkhart lake and then, during the winter months, he moves his paraphernalia out to the west coast.

"Never any trouble?" you ask.

"You mean raids? Naw, he's got it all fixed. Besides, the sheriff doesn't have to act unless somebody complains. And who is there to complain? Not the townsfolk. How'd you suppose they've been able to buy their brand new spick and span fire engine?"

If there has been any trouble it's been from the inside, your informant tells you. Every so often, as the summer seasons roll around, big boys

from Chicago and elsewhere have tried to horn in on the gambling at Elkhart lake. They set up their roulette tables, their chuck a luck game, their crap tables, but they don't last long. Presumably the big shot from Sheboygan, or his agents, put in a complaint. The sheriff acts, all is quiet for a week or less, and then the Sheboygan "boss" re-opens, his would-be competitors vanquished.

Gambling? Of Course

You arrive SAT. on a Saturday night, the big night, since all the week enders, as well as the vacationers, are present. You say to the boy who carries your luggage upstairs: "I hear there's some good gambling going on around here?" He looks at you a little pityingly at your naivete, and he says "Yes!" while his expression says "What'll hell! Of course there is!"

Somewhat abashed, you still put your next question: "Any trouble about getting in?"

This time he comes right out with it: "Of course not."

You return downstairs, intent upon looking for the casino. "Just a minute," the desk clerk calls to you. You go over to the desk and he hands you a green pasteboard card. "It's a courtesy pass to the pavilion that we give our guests," he says.

You don't need a pass to get into the casino, but you do if you want to get into the pavilion, and with this pass in hand you naturally gravitate toward it. And there you are, in the center of things, since the larger casino is right below the dance hall and the smaller casino is right next door.

The casino is flooded with amber light, except above the green felt-covered tops of the tables, upon which had glared white bulbs cast their beams. The amber light sets off to advantage the formal gowns and the welly of the women, of whom there are fully as many as there are men, the men almost invariably in the white trousers and dark coats that are worn for evening in the summer.

It's all pretty much of a family affair, this gambling, so far as the Chicago and St. Louis cloak and suit boys are concerned. They sit about the roulette tables—there are three of them in the larger casino—and their wives stand behind them, along with all the rest of the spectators. They lay their red, white, blue, green or yellow chips upon the numbers they choose, and if they are having

a particularly bad run of luck they may put "mama" in the chair to see what she can do.

Chips Melt Away

As for you, you feel like pretty much of a piker when you lay out a "fin" and ask for five bucks' worth of chips. They're soon gone, and you go on to the next apparatus.

It is chuck a luck, and chuck a luck as played at Elkhart lake offers a refinement on the game as usually played with three dice in a cage. All the possible combinations of three dice are on a giant revolving wheel of fortune.

You lay out a quarter on one of the numbers and the wheel, the mirror of its huge multi-pointed star staring you in the face, is set spinning. You watch the quarter go the way of most of the other quarters, and then you choose another number.

The operator bemoans the fact that quarters and even dimes are being played where dollar bills were the rule a few years ago.

Around on the other side of the room you try your luck at "Miami." You choose your number and two huge dice in a wire cage are given a turn. This, too, is a game for the smaller fry—at least insofar as quarters and dimes may be played here. The same is true of the mutual racing wheel, an apparatus which is put round almost exclusively by women and—for a fact—children.

The horses are numbered and the horses bear such well known names as Gallant Fox, Misslep, Lady Broadcast, Gallant Knight, Whiskery, Zev and Morvich. Here, too, a glittering wheel is set spinning and you win if you're lucky and you lose—usually.

But here is something more like it: Blackjack, twenty one, or call it what you will. A tense hush lingers over the spectators as they crane their necks to see the closely held cards the players are dealt expertly and suavely by the "professor" behind the table.

The breaks, of course, are all with the house, and your meager five bucks worth of chips does not go far. There are no women here; blackjack, it seems, is distinctly a gentlemen's game.

Where Dice Are Rolling

The tense silence, however, is as nothing to that which pervades the atmosphere about the crap table, which is in another room. Watching the 20 and 50 dollar bills that are handed the cashier, even without his wuthering glance you are apologetic for the \$10 you pass out for 10 measly blue chips.

The dice are yours and you give them a full, sweeping roll. (Nothing else is countenanced!) A natural! Not so bad, and you double your stakes as others come into cash in on your luck. An attendant takes in your dice with an instrument resembling a midiron used in golf, and you try again. But the spots are against you and you shoot "Little Joe." Seven fellows and the dice go on to the next man.

On his spurt of luck you run your \$10 up to \$25 and then, as quickly, you lose it all.

Someone says to the man next to you: "How're they going, Olson?" and you glance up at him quickly and unbelievably. A man named "Olson" is a rarity in this place.

Your "wad" gone, you stand back a bit and watch the facial expressions about you. Those of the losers are inclined to be tense, strained, and the traditional cigar is clenched between teeth. Those of the winners

are relaxed, genial and sometimes the winners will "kid" the dice or wise crack to the cashiers behind the table. Enviously you watch the man, self-satisfaction on his face, who "cashes in" for \$240.

Game "Tays," Is Rumor

Crap, too, it seems, is a man's game. There are one or two women about, but they are not playing and they are anxious.

"Be careful, Sam!" one of them admonishes her husband.

"Yes, yes, go along! You make me nervous," he says.

The rumor gets about and follows you wherever you go—to Pine Point or to the lake shore taverns patronized by the resorters—that the crap game is "paying" tonight.

"They've taken the crap game for \$3,500," it is said.

But you wonder whether that is not just a "come on."

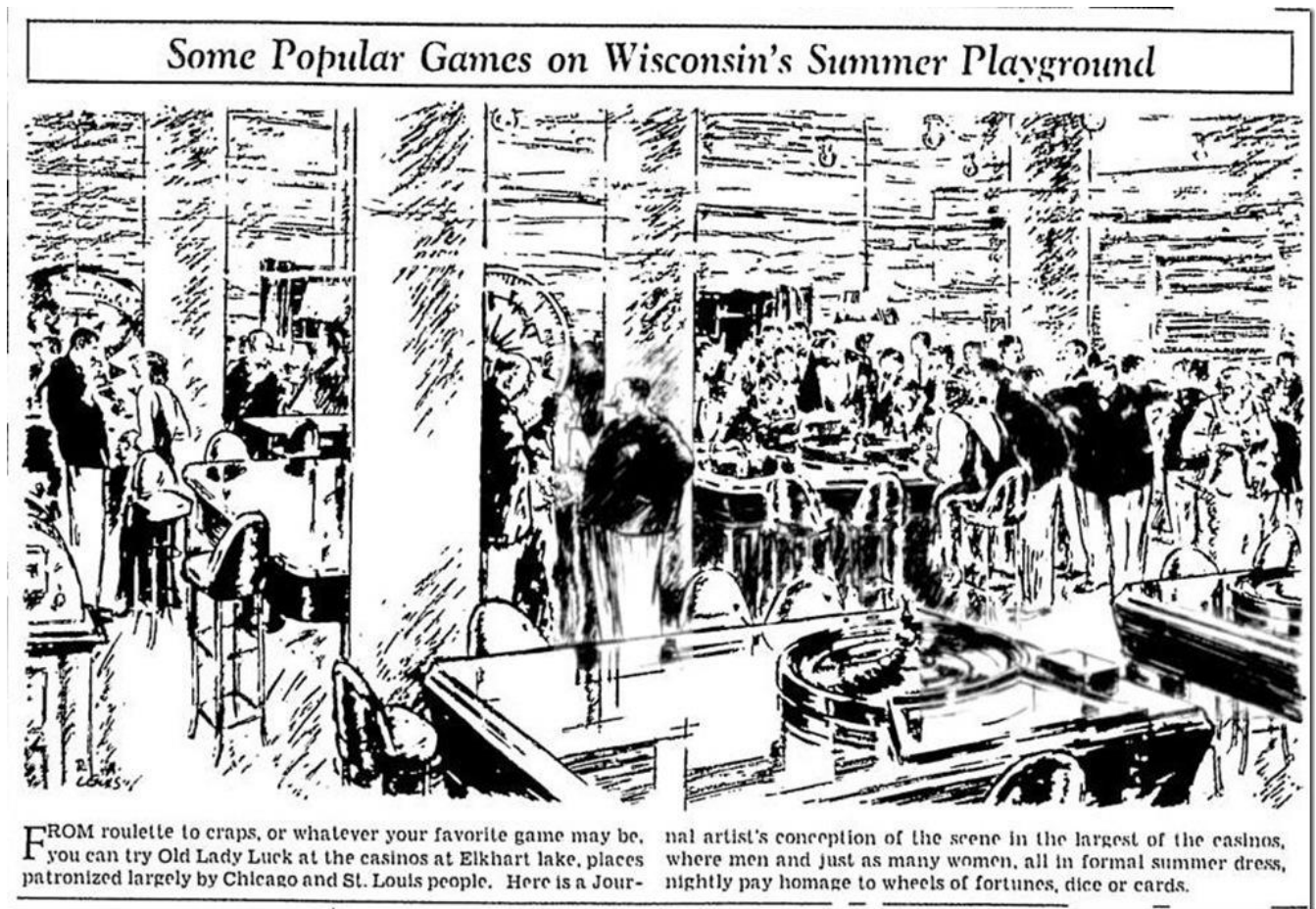
There are slot machines here and there to catch stray quarters, dimes and nickels that the big clock and suit boys have. But mostly these machines are patronized by the children—and in the early evening there are plenty of them about, some of them hardly 10 years of age. And you hear:

"Daddy, give me some money!"

You overhear a conversation between two women: "Abe lost \$492," says one. "And it's his own fault. I told him to be careful, and I couldn't be with him all the time."

But times are bad for the Elkhart lake casinos, if you can believe the operators, and it's pretty certain business isn't as rushing as it was a few years ago. The wife of the big shot from Sheboygan is credited with saying: "We might just as well have not opened. We haven't made a dime all season."

drawing from the same page:



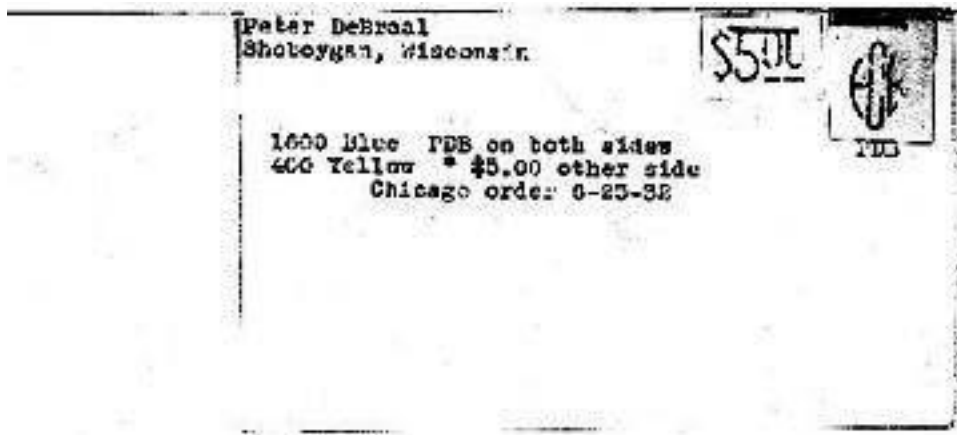
HOG11att2

My note: Here is the bonus to this story. The PDB chip was supposed to have its own "Illegal Of The Day" post. I was hoping to come up with more info on DeBaal. Maybe we have found more info. The newspaper states the "Big Shot" of the area gambling operations wintered in Los Angeles. DeBaal bought his chips in 1932, same time Denning operated The Eagles and he was a member of The Eagles.

Did we find our "Big Shot" or did DeBaal order some home game chips and take them to LA. Just wondering and no real proof of it.



HOG12att2



HOG13att2

In 1937 Peter DeBaal died of a heart attack in Sheboygan, age 56. The address on the chip card was his residential address. *I could find no direct evidence of DeBaal being involved with any gambling enterprise.* However, from 1914 through at least 1922 he was the proprietor of the Lake View Hotel in Sheboygan.

Built in 1895, the Lake View Hotel was originally owned by the Pabst Brewing Company; burned down in 1903; rebuilt in 1904; Pabst did not own it when DeBaal was the proprietor. The Hotel was a popular summer resort for visitors and a popular place for locals to dine and dance. Although I saw no evidence of it, it sounds like the kind of place that would have had some kind of gaming.

Unfortunately, there is no way that the chips DeBaal ordered could have been used there because the place burned to the ground in Nov. 1929 and was never rebuilt. I suppose it's possible that DeBaal could have been operating games there and the fire destroyed his stuff and he had to order new chips in 1930, but where he used them is unknown to me.

When he ordered the chips he was a licensed real estate broker. At the time he ordered the chips, and for several years prior, he and his family spent the winter months on the Pacific Coast in Santa Monica guess it's possible he could have used them there. He was also a member of several fraternal societies in Sheboygan (including Odd Fellows, Eagles).
